

Message Text

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF U.S. TOURISM TRADE MISSION

USDOC FOR BEWT/BOWDEN

1. SUMMARY. U.S. TOURISM TRADE MISSION HEADED BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE WASHBURN CONCLUDED ITS OFFICIAL PROGRAM IN USSR SEPTEMBER 24 WITH CALL ON DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER I.V. ARKHIPOV. CHARGE ACCOMPANIED GROUP FOR MEETING WITH ARKHIPOV. TONE OF MEETING WITH ARKHIPOV, AS WELL AS OF FINAL PLENARY MEETING EARLIER IN DAY AT WHICH JOINT STATEMENT WAS SIGNED (TEXT SEPTEL), WAS QUITE POSITIVE, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS CLEAR RECOGNITION ON BOTH SIDES THAT CONSIDERABLE WORK REMAINED TO BE DONE. FOLLOWING FINAL PLENARY, DELEGATIONS HELD PRESS CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY MOST OF MOSCOW-BASED U.S. PRESS CORP AND LARGE NUMBER OF SOVIET JOURNALISTS. END SUMMARY.

2. U.S. TOURISM TRADEMISSION CONCLUDED ITS VISIT TO USSR SEPTEMBER 24 ON HIGH NOTE, MEETING IN KREMLIN WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ARKHIPOV. ARKHIPOV, WHO WAS ACCOMPANUED AT MEETING BY CHAIRMAN OF USSR MAIN ADMINISTRATION FOR FOREIGN TOURISM NIKITIN, INTOURIST PRESIDENT BOICHENKO, AND BANK OF FOREIGN TRADE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN NIKITIKIN, WAS IN FRIENDLY AND EXPANSIVE MOOD. HE NOTED, INTER ALIA, THAT IN PAST OTHER MORE PRESSING NEEDS HAD PREVENTED SOVIETS FROM SPENDING

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AS MUCH ON DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM FACILITIES AS WORLD HAVE

BEEN DESIRABLE AND WELCOMED US-SOVIET COOPERATION IN THIS AREA AS CONTRIBUTION TO MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME. ARKHIPOV EXPLICITLY STATED, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH COOPERATION WOULD HAVE TO BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL AND ASSURED MEMBERS OF U.S. TRADE MISSION THAT THEY COULD EXPECT GOOD RETURN ON ANY INVESTMENT THEY MADE IN SOVIET TOURISM FACILITIES. AS HAD OTHER SOVIET OFFICIALS IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH TRADE MISSION, ARKHIPOV MADE CLEAR THAT AVAILABILITY OF U.S. CREDITS ON FAVORABLE TERMS WAS SEEN BY SOVIETS AS SINE QUA NON FOR EXPANDED COOPERATION. AT VARIOUS POINTS DURING MEETING, ARKHIPOV ALLUDED TO PROBLEMS SOVIETS FACE IN ALLOCATING INVESTMENT RESOURCES AMONG VARIOUS CLAIMANTS, INCLUDING MILITARY SECTOR WHERE HE SAID HE HOPED SPENDING COULD BE REDUCED.

3. RESPONDING TO ARKHIPOV'S REMARKS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY WASHBURN STRESSED INTEREST OF MEMBERS OF U.S. TRADE MISSION IN EXPANDING COOPERATION WITH USSR AND EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH ARKHIPOV'S OBSERVATION THAT GREATER CONTACTS THROUGH TOURISM WOULD REPRESENT MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVEMENT OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS. TAKING UP ARKHIPOV'S POINT ON NEED FOR MUTUAL BENEFITS, CHARGE SAID HE HOPED SOME OF USSR'S INCREASED HARD-CURRENCY EARNINGS FROM GREATER FLOW OF U.S. TOURISTS WOULD RETURN TO U.S. IN FORM SPENDING BY LARGER FLOW OF SOVIET TOURISTS. ARKHIPOV INSISTED THAT SOVIETS AHD INCREASED TWO-WAY FLOW IN MIND.

4. AS EXPECTED, MAJOR ISSUES WHICH AROSE DURING PLENARY DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN TWO DELEGATIONS WERE ROLE OF U.S. HOTEL COMPANIES IN MANAGEMENT OF HOTELS CONSTRUCTED IN USSR AND MEANS FOR ENCOURAGING INCREASED FLOW OF SOVIET TOURISTS TO U.S. ON FIRST POINT, AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE WAS NOT REACHED, ALTHOUGH REPRESENTATIVES OF U.S. HOTEL COMPANIES BELEIVE THAT CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS WAS MADE TOWARD EVENTUAL MEETING OF MINDS. LACK OF FULL AGREEMENT ON THIS POINT IS CLEAR FROM JOINT STATEMENT (PARA 14) AND WAS ONE OF MAJOR QUESTIONS RAISED BY U.S. JOURNALISTS AT SEPTEMBER 24 PRESS CONFERENCE. ON INCREASED SOVIET TOURISM TO U.S. N A POINT WHICH ALSO CAME UP PROMINENTLY AT PRESS CONFERENCE, NIKITIN AND OTHER SOVIETS TOOK GENERALLY POSITIVE LINE, ALTHOUGH THEY STRESSED OBSTACLES (HIGH PRICES IN U.S., LACK OF ORUSSIAN-SPEAKING GUIDES, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND PROBLEMS IN ARRANGING PROGRAMS WHICH APPEAL TO PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS OF SOVIET TOURISTS WERE MOST OFTEN CITED) WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE OVERCOME.

5. ON BASIS QUESTIONS POSED BY MEMBERS OF U.S. PRESS CORPS, EMBASSY BELIEVES REPORTING ON TRADE MISSION'S VISIT WILL BE SLIGHTLY SCEPTICAL AS TO RESULTS OF VISIT AND WILL EMPHASIZE PROBLEMS REMAINING TO BE SOLVED.

6. NIKITIN ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPALE ASSISTANT SECRETARY WASHBURN'S INVITATIONTO SEND SOVIET TOURISM DELEGATION TO U.S. EARLY IN 1975.

7. COMMENT: IN EMBASSY'S VIEW, TRADE MISSION'S VISIT WAS QUITE SUCCESSFUL. THANKS TO VERY RECEPTIVE SOVIET ATTITUDE, MISSION MEMBERS WERE RECEIVED AT HIGH LEVELS IN KEY SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS AND WERE ABLE TO PRESENT THEIR MEESAGE TO DECISION MAKERS ON SOVIET SIDE. SOVIET UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, POSITION OF U.S. HOTEL COMPANIES ON CONDITIONS WHICH COMPANIES WILL REQUIRE BEFORE THEY WOULD BE READY INVEST IN SOVIET HOTEL FACILITIES WAS NOT UNEXPECTED. MAJOR UNANSWERED QUESTION IS WHETHER SOVIET NEED FOR ASSISTANCE OF U.S. TOURISM INDUSTRY, BOTH IN TERMS OF TECHNOLOGY AND FINANCING, WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO OVERCOME IDEOLOGICALLY-MOTIVATED RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT MANAGEMENT ROLE FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES.
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